



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HOLLAI (President of the General Assembly)

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ORGANIZATION OF THE THIRTY-SEVENTH REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ALLOCATION OF ITEMS: MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THIRTY-SEVENTH REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,
ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ALLOCATION OF ITEMS: MEMORANDUM BY THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/BUR/37/1)

Section II: Organization of the session

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of members of the Committee to section II of document A/BUR/37/1 relating to the organization of the session. By its decision 34/401, which was reproduced as annex VI to the rules of procedure, the General Assembly had adopted a number of provisions aimed at rationalizing its procedures and organization. Many of those provisions had already been put into practice at the thirty-fourth, thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth sessions and were not therefore referred to in the document before the Committee. He suggested that the Committee might draw the General Assembly's attention to those provisions which had not yet been implemented or had been only partially implemented.

Paragraph 4 (General Committee)

2. The Committee decided to take note of the provisions of decision 34/401, contained in paragraph 4 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraph 5 (Schedule of meetings)

3. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to paragraph 5 of the Secretary-General's memorandum, which referred to the schedule of meetings and the punctuality with which they should begin. The Committee might also wish to draw the General Assembly's attention to rules 67 and 108 of the rules of procedure, whereby the President of the General Assembly could declare a meeting open and permit the debate to proceed when at least one-third of the members were present, and the Chairman of a Main Committee could declare a meeting open and permit the debate to proceed when at least one quarter of the members were present. He endorsed the suggestion made at the thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth sessions that each delegation should designate someone to be present at the scheduled time, thereby avoiding the problem of quorum. While noting that some progress had been made in that respect, he urged all delegations to make an extra effort since there was still considerable room for improvement.

4. The Committee decided to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the provision of decision 34/401 contained in paragraph 5 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraphs 6 and 7 (General debate)

5. The CHAIRMAN urged representatives, in view of the very large number of speakers already on the list of speakers, to take the floor in the order in which they appeared on the list. Those who were unable to speak at the scheduled time would be put at the end of the list for the following day.

6. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should adopt the suggestions in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraph 8 (Explanations of vote)

7. The Committee decided to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the provision of decision 34/401 contained in paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraph 9 (Closing date of the session)

8. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should adopt the suggestion in paragraph 9 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraph 10 (Records of the Main Committees)

9. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should adopt the suggestions in paragraph 10 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraph 11 (Seating arrangements)

10. The Committee took note of paragraph 11 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

11. The CHAIRMAN noted that the provisions of paragraphs 18 and 19 of decision 34/401 had been implemented only partially at the current session. The Committee might therefore wish to draw the Assembly's attention to that fact and stress the imperative need for their implementation.

12. It was so decided.

Paragraph 13 (Concluding statements)

13. The Committee decided to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the need to implement fully the provision of decision 34/401 contained in paragraph 13 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraphs 14 and 15 (Budgetary and Financial questions)

14. The Committee decided to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the provisions of decision 34/401 contained in paragraphs 14 and 15 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraphs 16 and 17 (Documentation)

15. The Committee decided to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the provision of decision 34/401 contained in paragraph 16 of the Secretary-General's memorandum and to recommend that the Assembly should adopt the suggestion in paragraph 17 of that document.

Paragraph 18 (Resolutions)

16. The Committee decided to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the provision of decision 34/401 contained in paragraph 18 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraph 19 (Special conferences)

17. The Committee decided to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the recommendation of the Committee on Conferences, adopted by the Assembly in its decision 34/405, as contained in paragraph 19 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraph 20 (Meetings of subsidiary organs)

18. The CHAIRMAN said that, in addition to the two subsidiary organs mentioned in paragraph 20, which dealt with meetings of subsidiary organs, the Committee on Conferences had subsequently recommended in document A/37/450/Add.1 that the following subsidiary organs of the General Assembly should also be authorized to meet during the thirty-seventh session: (a) the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People; (b) the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine; (c) the Special Committee against Apartheid; and (d) the United Nations Council for Namibia.

19. The Committee decided to authorize the two subsidiary organs mentioned in paragraph 20 of the Secretary-General's memorandum and the four subsidiary organs mentioned in document A/37/450/Add.1 to meet during the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

20. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee on Conferences had also recommended that the Committee of the Whole and the Committee of High-Level Government Experts of the Economic Commission for Latin America should be authorized to meet during the thirty-seventh session.

21. The Committee decided to refer that recommendation, which did not relate to subsidiary organs of the General Assembly, back to the Committee on Conferences for appropriate action.

Section III: Adoption of the agenda

22. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to section III of the memorandum by the Secretary-General, which related to the inclusion of items in the agenda of the thirty-seventh session. In accordance with the provisions of rule 40 of the rules of procedure, the Committee should not consider the substance of any item, except in so far as it had a bearing on whether or not the Committee should recommend the inclusion of the item in the agenda. The draft agenda consisted of 139 items, of which 133 appeared in the provisional agenda and 5 in the supplementary list, and one was an additional item.

Paragraph 22

23. The CHAIRMAN referred the Committee to the suggestions made by the Secretary-General in paragraph 22, according to which the Committee might wish to consider: (a) the grouping of related items under a single heading; and (b) the staggering of more items over two or more years.

24. The Committee took note of the suggestions in paragraph 22 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraph 23

Items 1 to 6

25. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that items 1 to 6 had already been dealt with in plenary meeting.

Items 7 to 19

26. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 7 to 19 in the agenda.

Item 20

27. Mr. PETROVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation was opposed to the inclusion of the item entitled "The situation in Kampuchea" in the agenda of the thirty-seventh session. The inclusion of that item, despite the clearly expressed wishes of Kampuchea, would constitute interference in that State's internal affairs and, accordingly, a flagrant violation of the provisions of the United Nations Charter, particularly Article 2. By seeking to favour the Pol Pot régime, such an initiative was likely to undermine the restoration of peace in the region. The United Nations should see to it that there was no interference in the internal affairs of States, should be committed to promoting goodneighbourly relations and should refrain from involvement in acts of provocation. Its task was to promote the normalization of the situation in the region and to make it a zone of peace.

28. Mr. VERCELES (Philippines) said that he unreservedly supported the inclusion of item 20 in the agenda. That item had been considered at previous sessions of the General Assembly, and there was no reason to exclude it at the current session. The General Assembly resolutions calling for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Kampuchea and the holding of free elections under United Nations supervision had not been implemented. Moreover, there had been certain new developments in Kampuchea, such as, the formation of a coalition Government. The delegations of the other States members of ASEAN, (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand), and his delegation supported the inclusion of item 20 in the agenda.

29. Mr. LIANG Yufan (China) noted that the General Assembly, at its thirty-sixth session, had again adopted a resolution on the situation in Kampuchea, calling for the immediate withdrawal of all the troops of the Vietnamese aggressor and respect

(Mr. Liang Yufan, China)

for the right of the Kampuchean people to determine their own destiny. The Assembly had also decided to include the item entitled "The situation in Kampuchea" in the provisional agenda of the thirty-seventh session.

30. The Vietnamese authorities still refused to withdraw their troops from Kampuchea, flouting United Nations resolutions, the Charter and the norms of international relations, and seriously threatening the security and stability of South-East Asia. Under those circumstances, it was indispensable again to include the item entitled "The situation in Kampuchea" in the agenda. His delegation supported the inclusion of that item and its consideration in plenary meeting.

31. Mr. GAYAMA (Congo) said that his delegation saw no need to keep the item on the agenda. While it appreciated the genuine concerns of the countries directly affected by the situation in the region, his delegation believed that to include the item in the agenda would be to ignore the evolution of the situation and would perpetuate tension needlessly. In objective terms, the Kampuchean people had seen an improvement in their lot since the overthrow of the Pol Pot dictatorship. The United Nations should not turn the knife in the wound.

32. Mr. ABRAS ZEWSKI (Poland) said that his delegation also opposed the inclusion of the item entitled "The situation in Kampuchea". The inclusion of that item would suggest an attitude prejudicial to the Kampuchean nation and a total disregard for political realities; it would not serve the cause of peace and stability in Indo-China. The achievements and successes of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, at the internal level and in the international arena, deserved every praise. The constructive proposals made by the People's Republic of Kampuchea and other countries were designed to promote the normalization of the situation. That was the type of regional initiative that the United Nations should encourage.

33. Mr. ROA-KOURI (Cuba) supported the representative of the Congo. The situation in Kampuchea was the exclusive concern of the people and Government of Kampuchea. He was astonished to hear the representative of the Philippines say that there had been positive developments in the situation in Kampuchea because a coalition Government had been formed. The only coalition Government he (Mr. Roa-Kouri) knew of was the Government of Pol Pot's supporters; that Government was not in Kampuchea, unlike the authentic Kampuchean Government, which controlled and exercised sovereignty over the territory of Kampuchea. Everyone knew that the problems and tension in South-East Asia were not caused by the current Government or by the relations it now wished to establish with its neighbours, but by the Pol Pot Government. The inclusion of item 20 in the agenda was therefore unwarranted.

34. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 20 in the agenda.

Items 21 to 24

35. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 21 to 24 in the agenda.

Item 25

36. The CHAIRMAN stated that the representative of Afghanistan has asked to participate in the discussion of item 25, entitled "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security"; if there was no objection, he would invite him to take a place at the Committee table.

37. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Zarif (Afghanistan) took a place at the Committee table.

38. Mr. ZARIF (Afghanistan) said that his delegation vigorously objected to the inclusion of item 25 in the agenda. As it had already had the opportunity to explain at the thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth sessions, Afghanistan was not prepared to discuss its internal affairs in any international forum, not even the General Assembly. That would be contrary to Article 2, paragraph 7, of the United Nations Charter. It was obvious that the imperialist and hegemonist forces were attempting to use such issues as the so-called question of Afghanistan to divert the attention of the international community from the vital problems around the world for which they were responsible. He had in mind the situation in Lebanon, in Palestine, in Namibia and in South Africa, the aggression against Angola, the interference in the internal affairs of Central American and Caribbean countries, the expansion of the imperialist military build-up, the threat of a nuclear holocaust, the plots against independent States, the refusal to recognize the right of peoples to self-determination and independence, the colonialist wars and the explosive economic situation, which was the result of unjust international economic relations.

39. Those in favour of the inclusion of item 25 in the agenda had no intention of helping to solve the problems in South-West Asia, but were seeking to create obstacles to any political situation. They were ignoring the two proposals put forward by Afghanistan on 14 May 1980 and 24 August 1981. Those proposals constituted the most realistic basis for a comprehensive solution of outstanding issues between Afghanistan and its neighbours. During the past year, Afghanistan and Pakistan had agreed to negotiate indirectly in June 1982. The favourable outcome of the Geneva discussions gave reason to hope that a solution would be reached at future negotiations. A debate on the question in the General Assembly would only add further complications. With the sincere political will of all the Governments concerned, a favourable political climate could be created for the launching of bilateral negotiations, which would help to iron out the existing difficulties, normalize relations between the countries and promote peace and stability in the region and throughout the world.

40. Even if the Committee decided to recommend the inclusion of item 25 in the agenda, Afghanistan would not submit to any outside pressure and would not consider itself bound by the results of the debate. The people of Afghanistan had shown their determination to rally round their revolutionary Government and did not expect the General Assembly to be used as an instrument of interference in the country's internal affairs. The best way for the Assembly to contribute to a settlement would be by avoiding any futile and propagandistic discussion of the question.

41. Mr. PETROVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) endorsed the statement by the representative of Afghanistan and opposed the inclusion of item 25 in the agenda. Attempts to force the General Assembly to consider the question completely ignored the protests of the Afghan Government against such interference in its internal affairs. United Nations intervention in that area was contrary to the elementary norms of international law and the provisions of the Charter, in particular Article 2, paragraph 7, thereof, and played into the hands of those who were waging an undeclared war against Afghanistan, were opposed to the normalization of the situation and wished to aggravate international tensions. Experience had shown that by debating that question and passing resolutions on it the General Assembly was making it more difficult to find a political solution and impeding constructive talks between the countries concerned. His delegation hoped that other delegations would show a sense of responsibility and not allow themselves to be caught up in manoeuvres which could only undermine the Organization's prestige and authority.

42. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that he could not support the inclusion of item 25 in the agenda because problems in that part of Asia could be resolved only through bilateral and multilateral negotiations between Afghanistan and its neighbours. A number of countries had already indicated that they welcomed the proposals made by Afghanistan with a view to reducing tensions, in the belief that, unlike United Nations intervention, such proposals would open the way to a political solution and the normalization of the situation and would make it possible to safeguard peace and security in the region.

43. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 25 in the agenda.

44. Mr. Zarif (Afghanistan) withdrew.

Items 26 to 29

45. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 26 to 29 in the agenda.

Item 30

46. Mr. DE LA BARRE DE NANTEUIL (France) expressed regret that the Committee must once again deal with the problem of the inclusion in the agenda of item 30 entitled "Question of the Comorian Island of Mayotte" and recalled that discussion of that question would be counter to Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter. The question of Mayotte was raised regularly in periodic talks between France and the Comoros and the Minister in charge of co-operation and development had recently discussed it at Moroni with the President of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros.

47. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 30 in the agenda.

Items 31 to 35

48. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 31 to 35 in the agenda.

Item 36

49. Mr. DE LE BARRE DE NANTEUIL (France) opposed the inclusion in the agenda of the item entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council", recalling that, were the General Assembly to discuss the question, that could only lead to a stalemate, provoke a confrontation and weaken the United Nations. Any change in the composition of the Security Council would affect its functioning and the balance which the Charter established among the main organs of the United Nations. Since the Council, the only organ which the Charter empowered to take decisions binding on all Member States, was by virtue of its functions guided by a philosophy other than that which guided the General Assembly, it would be a mistake to try to reproduce therein the geographical distribution of Member States of the General Assembly.

50. Mr. SHERMAN (United States of America) recalled that his delegation was opposed to the inclusion of item 30 in the agenda of the Assembly: its consideration by the Assembly could serve no useful purpose. On the contrary, the question of the strengthening of the role of the United Nations must continue to be dealt with by the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, where his delegation was prepared to consider any constructive proposals objectively and realistically.

51. Sir John THOMPSON (United Kingdom) endorsed the comments made by the representatives of France and the United States and emphasized that his delegation's position remained unchanged. Any proposal to increase the number of members of the Security Council would, far from enhancing its effectiveness, only create a further source of controversy within the Organization. The fact that interest in the question had subsided showed that due account was being taken of the realities of the situation.

52. Mr. PETROVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), recalling the Soviet Union's position of principle on the question, said that his delegation was opposed to the inclusion of the item in the agenda since its consideration would distract attention from serious problems which must be resolved without delay, in the interests of mankind as a whole, given current international tensions. Discussions on that issue were in fact a serious source of discord among Member States. If the membership of the Security Council was enlarged, that would amount to a revision of one of the basic provisions of the Charter. The question of the number of members of the Council was not an arithmetical one. According to Article 23 of the Charter, the composition of the Security Council had been determined basically in terms of the contribution which its members were expected to make to the maintenance of international peace and security.

53. The argument that an increase in the number of members of the Security Council would ensure more equitable representation reflecting the increase in the number of Member States of the Organization was without substance. As experience had shown,

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

the Council's current composition was sufficiently balanced and reflected faithfully the present situation in the world since the African, Asian and Latin American States already held 70 per cent of the seats reserved for non-permanent members of the Council. Thus, the Security Council could take no decision without their agreement. Any enlargement of the membership of the Council would have an adverse effect on the functioning and effectiveness of an organ which was designed to act quickly. If the General Assembly considered the question, that would have adverse consequences not only for the Organization but also for international relations as a whole.

54. Mr. ROA-KOURI (Cuba) pointed out that the non-aligned countries, who had raised the issue, were not trying to provoke a confrontation in the General Assembly or to violate the Charter of the United Nations. They were perfectly aware that the number of members of the Council could be increased only with the agreement of its permanent members and they were not trying to get the General Assembly to take a decision which ran counter to the Charter and undermined the important role which the Council must play in safeguarding international peace and security. However, in view of the increase in the number of Member States, which now stood at 157, and in accordance with the principle of universality enshrined in the Charter, the African, Asian and Latin American countries now believed that the number of members of the Council must be increased, as had already happened once in the past. Such a change would in no way affect the veto power of the permanent members, and if the Council could function effectively with 15 members, there was no reason why it should not do so with a greater number of non-permanent members. Any difficulties which the Council might encounter in performing its task were not due to the number of its members but to the way in which some of the latter had abused their veto power in recent international crises. The request to include the item in the agenda enjoyed broad support among the countries of the third world and must therefore be approved by the General Committee and recommended to the Assembly.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.